

AHCPR Smoking Cessation Guideline Impact Trial

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BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Smoking Cessation Practice Guideline recommends that all clinicians strongly advise their patients who use tobacco to quit, but whether implementing the guideline in primary care results in improved cessation outcomes is unclear.

OBJECTIVE (S):

Because of the lack of experimental evidence of the guideline's feasibility and effectiveness in primary care practice, the purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of utilizing non-physician staff to implement the Agency for Health Care Research Smoking Cessation Clinical Practice Guideline.

METHODS:

We conducted a randomized, controlled effectiveness trial in eight community-based primary care clinics in Southern Wisconsin. After baseline data collection, the intervention was implemented at test sites over a 2-month period and included: 1) a tutorial for nursing staff, 2) modified vital signs stamp that reminded nursing staff to identify smokers and to offer brief cessation counseling, 3) free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), 4) proactive telephone counseling, and 5) group and individual performance feedback to nursing staff. We obtained exit interviews of 2163 consecutive adults who presented for routine, non-emergency care. Abstinence (7-day point prevalence and continuous) was determined by telephone interview during 6-month follow-up.

FINDINGS / RESULTS:

During the intervention period, patients at test sites were significantly more likely to be abstinent at 2-months (16.4 vs. 5.8%, adjusted OR 3.3 {95% CI 1.9-5.6}, $p < 0.001$) and at 6-months (15.4 vs. 9.8%, adjusted OR 1.7 {95% CI 1.2-2.6}, $p = 0.009$), and were more likely to be continuously abstinent during follow-up (10.9 vs. 3.8%, adjusted OR=3.4 {95% CI 1.8-6.3}, $p < 0.001$) compared to patients at control sites. No significant differences in quit rates between test and control sites were observed during the pre-intervention period.

IMPACT:

This research provides needed evidence on the effectiveness of a national smoking cessation guideline in clinical practice, as well as more general insights into the utilization of guidelines to improve preventative care. Specifically, the results of this study demonstrate that implementation of a guideline-based smoking cessation intervention by nursing staff translates into increased abstinence in primary care practice.

PUBLICATIONS:

Journal Articles

1. Katz DA, Muehlenbruch DR, Brown RL, Fiore MC, Baker TB. Effectiveness of implementing the agency for healthcare research and quality smoking cessation clinical practice guideline: a randomized, controlled trial. Journal of The National Cancer Institute 2004; 96: 594-603.